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China Report

POLITICAL, SOCIOLOGICAL AND MILITARY AFFAIRS

(FOUO 6/81)

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MILITARY AND PUBLIC SECURITY

ROLE OF JOINT OPERATIONS IN MODERN WARFARE DISCUSSED

Beijing JIEFANGJUN BAO in Chinese 4 Feb 81 p 2

[Article by army commander Cai Buchi [2580 2975 1062]: "It Is Necessary To Further Define the Purpose of Basic Training"]

[Text] The public unanimously recognizes that the basic training program is important and that it is a self-evident fact. However, they have failed to pay enough attention to the objective of basic training. The importance and objective of basic training are two related but different issues. Practice shows that whether the basic training program has a well-defined objective spells a big difference in the results of the training. In my opinion, using existing equipment to extend the application of basic training to real wars and to shorten the period between training and combat-readiness in order to meet the needs of the joint operations of our armed forces is the starting point and ultimate objective of our basic training program.

Does everyone clearly understand this objective? Not really. It must be said that formalism still exists to varying degrees in some of our army units when they undergo basic training. For example, they emphasize basic maneuvers and neglect basic theories; they emphasize technical essentials and neglect tactical essentials; they emphasize the essentials of daylight operations and neglect those of night fighting; they emphasize the basic training of fighters instead of cadres; they emphasize the so-called "rigid targets" clearly indicated by numerals, meters and minutes instead of "nonrigid targets" which cannot be represented by any figures. In sorth, they emphasize basic training under the general (normal) conditions and neglect basic training under the complicated conditions (simulating real wars). The consequence of this attitude toward basic training is very bad. While undergoing shooting training, some units often score outstanding successes at the firing ranges. Their scores often drop markedly when the shooting is practiced under conditions simulating the tactical scenes of real war. The signal corps can maintain communications under general conditions but would fail in their duties in the event of interference. The artillery units can hit their targets under well-prepared conditions but would miss them in times of an emergency callup. It seems necessary to overcome formalism and championship mentality in order to achieve the well-defined objective of basic training.

How to treat achievements is really a problem. Should the training be treated as a mission to fight wars or as part of show business? Do we want to score successes under general conditions or under conditions simulating real wars?

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Either a correct or misleading guiding thought of training would result from the answers to these questions. The desire for some norms and conventions and for achievements does not conflict with the purpose of real wars. But it should not depart from the general objective of treating the training as a mission to fight wars. In recent years, the slogan "the training should be regarded as a mission to fight wars" is no longer shouted as loudly as before. Today it seems necessary to renew this slogan. The genuine realization of the concept of treating training as a mission to fight wars calls for a scientific training program. To meet the needs of real wars, an overall evaluation of various basic training programs is necessary so that their execution can be arranged in the order of priorities or in the order of importance and urgency and treated in different ways. Specific length of time and equipment should be allocated to guarantee the execution of badly needed important basic training programs in times of a real war, and high standards should be set for each of them. Leadership of all levels should work hard to meet these standards. Among them are the basic training of cadres in organizing the command system, the basic training of various arms and services in joint operations, combat shooting practice as part of marksmanship training, the antitank, the antiatomic bomb and antichemical defensive training under the "three-anti and three defensive operations" program. On the other hand, standards should not be set too high for less important and not so urgently needed programs as training in bayonet fighting and hand-grenade throwing. As long as we bear in mind the necessity of treating training as a mission to fight wars and devote our limited time for training to carrying out the most urgent, most difficult and most useful programs, we can certainly produce solid results in basic training.

A further effort to define the objective of basic training calls for a vigorous study of and seeking of solutions for new problems resulting from basic training in fighting wars under modern conditions. Some comrades say that it is dull and prosaic to engage in the same old basic training program year after year. This idea results from the following three facts: 1. Because the training is organized in a "hodge-podge" way, its content is "universally applicable," the basic training program has given the people the impression that "it is something new for the 1st year, overlapping for the 2d year and too old for the 3d year"; 2. The content and demands of basic training have been assessed from an unchanging point of view; 3. The mischievous idea of self-complacency is troublesome. The three facts originate from this truth: a lack of purpose and conviction in modern warfare.

The allegation that the basic training program is "nothing new" seemingly sounds true. For example, participants in the rifle and machinegun firing training should remember the "three points--the target, miss point and bull's eye--and one straight line" rule or the most rudimentary knowledge. If the structure of rifle and machinegun remains basically the same, this "old rule" on shooting training would not be changed. But we must see the constant changes that take place in basic training--changes in the targets to be fought, changes in the weapons and equipment used by ourselves and the enemy, the induction of new soldiers year after year and the constant turnaround of cadres. These developments and changes are certain to add new elements to the content and demands of basic training. The extremely cruel nature of modern warfare and the constant changes in the situation on battlefields will also place new demands on the joint operations of the armed forces, the content of basic training, the political, technical and physical qualities of army units. Great progress has been made by the enemy in

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areas of firepower, mobility, ability to mount surprise attacks, battlefield observation, equipment used in the command system in modern warfare. This has also placed new demands on marksmanship training, and training in mobility, communications, command art, security arrangements, and joint operations. To use inferior equipment to defeat an enemy armed with superior equipment, we must understand many strange problems and overcome many difficulties. For example, if cadres in command positions have no rich professional knowledge, no strategy to win victory by surprise attacks, no superlative command art, and no strong will to fight under complicated conditions, our armed forces will find it impossible to coordinate with each other in attacking the enemy. More and more comrades have come to realize that the factor of time is crucial in modern warfare, and war preparations should be calculated by minutes and seconds rather than by days and hours. Any delay in terms of a few minutes may cause tremendous changes in the situation on battlefields. In a confrontation with the enemy mechanical and armored crops, the enemy artillery fire would quickly overcome us and the enemy tanks and armored cars would soon storm our positions if our first firing missed the targets. If one of the services participating in a joint operation lacks solid basic training, it will find it impossible to coordinate with other services. The cruelties of war may take a heavier toll than expected on battlefields. If we lack versatile basic training, we will find it difficult to cope with the modern warfare and will find ourselves unable to use a variety of deployed weapons to the best advantage. All of these demand that we overcome the "old concept" of basic training, and change the "universally applicable" content of training, and the "hodge-podge" approach to the organization of training. We must do everything possible to avoid the unnecessary and overlapping practices in training. Vigorous efforts must be made to develop the training program in a scientific way and to stimulate the enthusiasm of commanders and fighters for military training. We must help them explore new methods of basic training through the discussion of new topics of modern warfare.

Some comrades are concerned that emphasizing joint training this way may lead to the toning down of basic training. This concern is unnecessary. Why couldn't a joint training program materialize as a result of so many years of basic training which is supposed to help army units improve their basic skills in fighting? Although the reasons are manifold, the root cause of this problem is a lack of a clear declaration that the objective of basic training is to serve the joint operation of the armed forces. In the final analysis, the basic training program is the basis of training in joint operations. The purpose of this training is to make joint operations possible. For this reason, the basic training program cannot depart from the guidelines of joint operations. Just as in the case of laying a foundation for a multistory building, the construction of this project cannot get underway if the foundation is not laid firmly. It must be noted, however, that the foundation for a two-story building differs in requirements from the foundation for a six-story building. Our desire to use the concept of joint operations to guide and enhance the basic training program has the objective of testing the basic training program in the tactical joint training and joint operations of the armed forces, and improving coordination between the basic training program and joint exercises. Advocating the use of the concept of joint operation to guide basic training absolutely does not stem from a desire to promote any "leapfrog-type" joint training during the period of basic training. What we really want is a training program still to be carried out in accordance with related regulations. Last year when we selected a reinforced infantry

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regiment to participate in a joint training program, we began with the proclamation of a requirement for "laying a solid foundation and doing everything possible to serve the joint operations." We devoted two-thirds or more of the time allotted to this joint operation to the basic training. The training was organized in a way that proceeded from an elementary course to an advanced course, from a simple course to a complex program, from the training in basic skills to their application, and from the training for individuals to joint training. In addition to conscientiously grasping the basic training of army units, we concentrated attention on training cadres in basic skills. As soon as the groundwork was laid for various professional detachments of a specific army unit, training in improving basic skills in coordinating infantry with artillery units, infantry units with tanks, and ground forces with air force units was added to the entire program. As soon as the guidelines of joint operations were strengthened, we placed the basic training program under the guidance of an overall joint training program. The result was great success in basic training. Our achievements in major performances proved to be better than in previous years, thus laying a firm foundation for the subsequent joint tactical training program. Practice shows that the emphasis of laying groundwork for joint operations will result in strengthening rather than weakening the basic training program. We should not pit basic training against joint training, and should not separate the former from the latter. Only by integrating the two into a single effort in an organic way can we lend substance to the objective of basic training and provide a reliable guarantee for fulfilling the joint training program. It is wrong to assume that advocating the use of the concept of a joint operation to guide the basic training program as an attempt to discard the basic training program or circumvent it to carry out the joint training program. The application of the concept of a joint operation to guide the basic training program calls for a scientific training plan. Our armed forces have different arms, services and professional detachments. What they should do first, what should come next, how they can proceed with their basic training programs, how these programs should be arranged, and what standards should be set for these programs are tasks that should be specifically planned and carried out in accordance with related requirements. These programs should be scheduled in an orderly manner and in sequences which advance from the low level to the high level and from the individual training to the joint training. We should emphasize training in basic skills on the one hand and training in their application on the other. While promoting professional training for individuals, we must attach importance to laying groundwork for joint training. In addition to grasping the joint training of a single service, we must pay attention to the joint training of various services. Only in this way, can we leave a mark every step of the way, and raise the basic training program to a new level during our march to the goal of a joint operation.

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MILITARY AND PUBLIC SECURITY

MAJOR REFORM IN MILITARY TRAINING OUTLINED

Beijing JIEFANGJUN BAO in Chinese 12 Sep 79 pp 1-2

[Article by Lin Jian [2651 0494] et al.: "A Major Change Is Needed in Our Military Training"]

[Text] Drill must become a "bloodless battle" and battle must become a "bloody drill." In the 1st century A.D., Josephus made this statement when discussing the Roman training method, and it concisely and comprehensively lays bare the relationship between training and war. The war of self-defense counterattack against Vietnam that we waged at the end of the 70's decade of the 20th century proved again the truth that training and war are interdependent, mutually permeating, and mutually changeable.

The sound of rifles and cannon in the lofty mountains and jungle of Asia's tropics echoes throughout the whole army. Having passed through a "bloody drill," the great number of officers and men are thinking deeply about a "bloodless battle." How can they truly change the experience bought with blood in the war into wealth that guides training? Does the training content and methods practiced for many years need a major change? What is the way, in the final analysis, to achieve greater, faster, better, and more economical results in training for combat preparedness? Should our training stick to old ways? Should these old ways be slowly replaced or should they be vigorously eliminated and new ways be fostered so as to speedily get on the track of modernization?

How are we to change our military training? Introducing the discussion of the criterion for truth into the military realm (isn't this to talk about "making up a missed lesson"? This is a good subject relating to reality.), to look at training from the angle of actual combat, the following several questions directly enter our inquiry.

We Should Make "Armed Defense of the Four Modernizations" the Standpoint of Training

The war of self-defensive counterattack against Vietnam smashed the argument that we "prepared again and again against a war that would never come," and deepened our concept of "armed defense of the four modernizations. Hegemonism will not readily resign itself to our country's carrying out the four modernizations but will certainly seek an opportunity to destroy them, and the biggest destruction is effected by instigating a war. It is hard to imagine that our country's four modernizations will be peacefully carried out in an international environment free from the threat of war. This view was confirmed by this war that we fought. From harsh reality we can only draw the conclusion: the four modernizations must be defended by armed struggle.

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Making the armed defense of the four modernizations the standpoint of training is the embodient of defending the motherland and defending socialist construction, and is the demand raised by the general task of this new era with regard to training. For our training to make the defense of the four modernization its standpoint, we must have a clearcut guiding ideology so that we can maintain a correct orientation and arouse even more the enthusiasm for training. "The training received in 1 month of combat action is superior to the training received in 1 year of peacetime." Why? The principle is this. If we take the training in this combat action to be that of a "small-scale action," then, no matter whether its distance in time from the outbreak of the next war is long or short, we might as well, during this period of time, look upon it as a "big-scale action." Our training will change with every passing day and the changes will be considerable. The kind of peacetime training idea that "day after day we go to the training ground but we are not preparing to go to the battlefield," that kind of work style "only thunder but no rain," i.e., much said but little done and shouting strategic slogans as if they were tactical slogans, that kind of "cups and medals mania" tendency that the purpose of training is comparison and competition, that kind of bureaucratic practice that draws a circle about something but refuses to have the final say about it, and for a long time remains at the stage of "research"--in 8 or 9 cases out of 10 is a fault in training standpoint.

We Must Make Education and Training Central

The 3d Plenary Session of the 11th CCP Central Committee unequivocally proclaimed: The focus of the entire party's work is to be shifted to the construction of socialist modernization. In line with this historical shift, education and training should be made central in armed forces' work and the pace of the construction of modernization quickened. If one is not clear about this point, the strategic position of training can only sink to the level of empty talk. In the past, owing to the damage inflicted by Lin Biao and the "gang of four," there was created a situation in which only civil affairs were carried out and military affairs were ignored, and there was "military blindness" on the part of armed groups. The units did not all receive training, those in principal charge of military administration withdrew to the second line, and many of those handling training were "back-benchers." This situation was hard to reverse.

In accordance with the theory concerning the principal contradiction in our country at the present stage put forward by the communique of the 3d Plenary Session and Comrade Hua Guofeng's "Report on the Work of the Government," and analyzing the current state of affairs in our armed forces, we can clearly see: the degree of modernization in our armed forces is still very low and is far from meeting the demands of modern warfare. To change all the rules and regulations, establishments and systems, leaders' work styles, work methods, and force of habit that do not suit the construction of modernization, and to rapidly raise the level of modernization in strategy and tactics, is the principal contradiction that needs to be resolved by our armed forces at the present stage and is also the central task of our armed forces in this stage. In order to resolve this contradiction, under conditions when we are not at war, we must mainly rely on education and training. Political work must be strengthened, and it must center on serve this central task. We must not and should not again take class struggle as the key link or make political movements central. In order to strengthen the construction of the armed

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forces, the Military Commission [of the CCP Central Committee] convoked three conferences was to have the entire armed forces make preparations against war. In this process, a great amount of the daily work went into education and training. Facts in this war of self-defensive counterattack against Vietnam proved: it makes a great difference whether training is carried out or not, it makes a great difference whether training is good or otherwise, and it makes a great difference whether the cadres have been trained in military academies or schools or not. Thus, it was natural and logical to shift the focus of the entire armed forces' work to the strengthening of modernization with education and training at the core.

To judge whether education and training are truly at the core, we can study some items, e.g., whether the majority of units are being given and are truly being given all-round training; whether the principal persons in charge of military administration in units being given all-round training devote their principal energy and time to grasping training; whether the personnel, time, content, and quality of the training are ascertained in advance; whether the situation has changed in cadre training so that key points are discussed, difficult points are grasped, and weak points are inspected; and whether, in transmitting missions to the lower levels, the headquarters, political and logistical organizations work as one to grasp this core, and create by all means conditions for good training. This last item is a very key item, and it must be resolved well.

Prevent and Overcome the Practice in Training Guidance of "Cutting With One Stroke of the Knife"

Our armed forces are garrisoned in the vast territory of the motherland. In each garrison area, the terrain is different, there is a great disparity in heat and cold, the enemy's situation is different, and the mission is different. Thus, in training guidance, we must prevent and overcome simplification, i.e., "cutting with one stroke of the knife." For example: acting as if the northern and southern parts of the country were alike, as if the defense of the interior and the defense of the borders were alike, as if the strategy for first-line forces and the strategy for reserve forces were alike, as if field armies and regional forces were alike, and as if veteran soldiers and new soldiers were alike. In the distribution of specific topics and time for company training, to unify this distribution too rigidly is very detrimental to arousing the enthusiasm of the cadres and fighters. For example, on an island where communications are handled by electric cable, to still demand that telephone soldiers erect telephone poles for pole-climbing training; in digging an antitank network, to demand that mountainous areas and plains be treated alike, so that the troops are forced to level a hilltop before digging the ditches. The great number of officers and men sum up these phenomena by calling this training guidance "cutting with one stroke of the knife."

"Cutting with one stroke of the knife"--this product of subjectivism and bureaucratism--has become more and more unworkable. It replaces the specific with the general, uses the generality to obliterate the individual, "cutting" down the training focus," cutting down the initiative of the officers and men, and seriously divorcing training from actual combat. If one is not trained in the requirements of war, one cannot act vigorously. If a unit in mountains and jungles are not trained in map recognition and reading, then during a maneuver it cannot move according to the azimuth and it will go back and forth and finally return to where it originally

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started from, with the result that the unit will have proof that "the earth is round."

Do you want, by seeking truth from facts and by proceeding from reality, to change this state of affairs of "cutting with one stroke of the knife"? Then you will be going against the training outline; if you want to stick to the outline, then you will be separating yourself from reality. Because the outline was promulgated by the upper level, the result will only be to do things in a Procrustean manner, making reality submit to the outline, the objective submit to the subjective.

The bloody experiences and lessons of this war of self-defensive counterattack made people feel most sorrowfully that "cutting with one stroke of the knife" brings great trouble to others and that we cannot let it continue. Many units that took part in the war have suggested: Either there should be a fairly large revision of the training outline or it should not be followed. This outline was formulated on the unchanging foundation of an annual training period (90 to 120 days), with the result that there are many contradictions in it. Whether it is possible or not to have the outline, for every year the headquarters of the General Staff issues a training directive containing the policy, principles, content, and demands for training, which provides the basis for education and training in the entire armed forces. Each military man, each service arm, and each unit integrates its combat mission, paying attention to its own combat objective and its own terrain and climatic features, and drafts its training plan, which is then reported to the headquarters of the General Staff. Thus, our training guidance is unified but not rigidly so, is concentrated but not excessively so, and it possesses both generality and particularity. What is displayed is not the enthusiasm of one but of many, and the training moves along like a gain of chess.

The Single Service Arm Mentality Is Very Harmful

There is this example of a battle: The 1st Company of a certain unit was attacking a certain hill. The company commander had put the weapons attached to his unit to one side, and let the infantry make 11 attacks in succession. They fought for 9 hours 44 minutes without success. The company commander then thought of the heavy machineguns, flamethrowers, the engineer squad, and the recoilless rifles that had not yet been used. By organizing their coordinated use, the battle was decided in only 20 minutes. This battle example shows that it is truly inadequate for a company commander, as he did in the past, to brandish his Mauser pistol and shout "Charge!"; that in peacetime if one is accustomed to think in terms of one service arm, then in fighting a war one will have artillery pieces but not use them, and the slogan "cannon cannot prevail over bayonets, so infantry decides the outcome of a battle," which is like a satchel charge in the mind, is out-of-date and should be changed to "cannon can prevail over bayonets and the outcome of a battle is decided by coordination of the service arms."

The problems revealed by this kind of battle example are representative of those among commanders at all levels. They regard the special arms attached to their units as "millstones around their necks," fiddle with them and do not think of using them, forget about them when organizing a battle, and by attending to one thing lose sight of another; they unconditionally let tanks charge ahead without opening a route for them; they want the flamethrower soldiers to throw flames but do not

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have command authority, and those who have command authority do not understand the special arms; and they unscientifically issue blind orders to technical service arms that exceed the capacity of these arms. All these things invariably show that the single service arm mentality has gravely endangered combat operations and hindered training, and is harming out combat effectiveness.

The single service arm mentality has become a kind of ideology. It took shape for many reasons: historical and current, ideological and organizational, and theoretical and practical. It is deep-rooted and quite hard to change. In the 1920's, the old Red Army carried knapsacks wherever it went and threw wooden-handled hand grenades; in the 1970's, the youths still carry knapsacks everywhere and the wooden handle of the hand grenade has not been cast aside. The battle career over several decades of "millet plus rifles" deeply imprinted the single service arm mentality on the minds of many of our comrades. The slogan "battles are decided by infantry" has become an unalterable theory for them. In peacetime, very little training in combined arms operations is done, and some soldiers of the special arms become production soldiers and noncombatant soldiers, while many leading cadres frequently concern themselves only with the infantry. Our army has already changed from being a single service arm to being a combined arms force, and the number of special arms companies exceeds that of infantry companies, but these leading cadres still always consider infantry the "big boss." In the military establishment and system in effect and the weaponry and equipment on hand, there remain many single service arm malpractices, which are detrimental to carrying out combined arms operations. There are now few materials on foreign armies provided, no organizing of visits to observe the advanced weaponry and equipment of units. Irrational restrictions and fetters and security measures close people's minds so that they are ignorant and ill-informed. The outmoded, backward single service arm mentality departs far from the trend toward modernization of the armed forces. To overcome it, to eliminate it, and to replace it with combined arms training and coordinated operations has become a task of top priority in fundamentally changing the features of trianing in our armed forces.

Some tentative measures have already been found for preventing or overcoming the single service arm mentality:

1. The higher military academies and schools are to offer training courses for high-ranking cadres in which they will study modern warfare, study the performance and function of modernized weaponry and equipment, and study the organizational command of coordinated operations involving all service arms. All ordinary cadres must enter, in turn, the academies and schools to pursue advanced studies. The units must run well groups for training cadres in rotation.

2. In deploying infantry and special arms cadres, "combined arms" groups are to be set up, thereby changing the state of affairs in which the membership of leadership groups are homogenous.

3. Every army is to organize and set up a combined arms regiment (battalion) consisting of infantry, artillery, tank and other service arms, first planting "experimental plots," gaining experience, and then gradually popularizing them.

4. There will be more live tactical combined training in which all service arms will participate.

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Persons will, in a planned way, be sent out of the country for on-the spot investigations in order to learn about the experience of foreign armies in combined arms training and coordinated military operations.

Break Away From the Dogmatic Attitude Toward Mao Zedong's Military Thought

What is the basis for bringing up these questions? Please look at the facts:

In writing and compiling teaching materials, some people do not use the fundamental principles of, and the standpoint, viewpoint, and method for studying warfare in, Mao Zedong's military thought, but simply load their materials with the quotations [of Mao Zedong]. They do not think about forging ahead in the study of military theory, and thus strategic and tactical thought follows old regulations and living military principles are changed into dead articles.

Study and research on military theory are insufficiently integrated with reality. The principles of fighting a battle of annihilation--concentration of military force being the condition, thrusting deep and outflanking being the method, and complete encirclement being the plan--can be thoroughly memorized but when applied can still be only a gleam on the horizon.

They take principles to be the starting point for studying problems. In summing up training and combat experiences, they do not want to investigate and study, do not want to make a concrete analysis, and simplistically reach triumphant conclusions.

With regard to whatever Chairman Mao had said, no matter how the situation had changed, the conclusions did not change. At the end of 1945, Chairman Mao said, "With regard to training items, raising the technical level of firing, bayonet charges, and throwing hand grenades are still primary and raising the tactical level is supplementary." Today, several decades later, they still take this statement to be the basis for life-risking bayonet charges and hand grenade throwing. Some of the 10 major military principles that Chairman Mao talked about must be developed, and some of them must be revised, and specific ones have already become unsuitable. Some comrades still insist: The 10 major military principles are completely suitable, suitable in the past, at present, and in the future.

With regard to Mao Zedong's military thought, we can only discuss its application and dare not discuss its development. Chairman Mao did not discuss many questions of modern warfare (e.g., concentrating military force, engaging in close combat and night combat, and attacking massed tanks), and so we dare not air his opinions about them. If one stubbornly wants to discuss them a little, then one will be using indiscriminate applications of realymade principles and formulas as a substitute for an earnest inquiry into academic military problems.

From the abovementioned facts we see the shadow of the "pinnacle theory" and the vestiges of the two "whatevers" in the realm of military thought. In short, they both make a mystery of and a formula of Mao Zedong's military thought. If we take this dogmatic attitude, then we will not be able to understand completely and accurately Mao Zedong's military thought or grasp it in line with seeking truth from facts, and Mao Zedong's military thought cannot truly become a compass for our army's training and combat operations.

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Training requires for its correct guidance advanced, scientific military theory. Looking at this thought from the angle of modern features and developments, laying stress on studying the application of Mao Zedong's military thought under the conditions of modern warfare, and, by integrating theory with practice, answering and solving training and operational problems--this is the Marxist attitude toward military theory. We can predict that, after this dogmatic attitude is thoroughly eradicated, our army's education and training will rapidly get on the right track and be able to pass the severe test of war.

X X X X X X [as published]

People cannot completely recognize truth at one stroke. Truth must be continually tested by practice. Whether the various points we have expounded in this article are really true depends on the test of practice, and we are ready to study them together with everybody.

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MILITARY AND PUBLIC SECURITY

TRAINING TESTS REFORMED TO REFLECT ACTUAL COMBAT CONDITIONS

Beijing JIEFANGJUN BAO in Chinese 5 Sep 79 p 2

[Article by deputy army commander Wang Gencheng [3769 2704 2052]: "Preliminary Trials and Ideas About Training Examination Reform"]

[Text] Not long ago we organized a comprehensive tactical examination under field conditions and with soldiers using live ammunition in which 11 companies of infantry, artillery, and tanks took part, and conducted preliminary trials on how to make combat operations, training, and examinations consistent. From the practice of this examination we saw that the following three aspects of examination reform need to be resolved.

The Content of Examinations Must Embody Changes in the Key Points of Training

At present, the unit's training has already shifted from the past when attacks on infantry were primary to making attacks on tanks primary, from training a single service arm to training in coordinating all service arms, and from stressing techniques to paying full attention to tactics. This suits the demands of actual combat, and the examination content should embody the changes in the key points of training, so as to impel the unit to pay full attention to the training topics that are required by combat operations.

Add to the proportion of the "three attacks and three defenses" in training examinations. Everybody knows the importance of the "three attacks and three defenses," but at present the proportion of this aspect in the content of examinations is still fairly small and needs to be bigger. For this examination, we arranged for 10 out of the 19 training topics to include the "three attacks and three defenses" in the examination content. For the firing at fixed and moving targets of the 85mm cannon, the 82mm recoilless rifle, and the 40mm rocket launcher--all against a background of actual combat--there were examined three different missions under different conditions and over different terrain. In order to make this key point more prominent, we also increased the score proportion so that "three attacks and three defenses" topics counted for 65 percent of the total score.

Strengthen the examination of tactical training. Practice in the war of self-defensive counterattack on the China-Vietnam border showed us that it is extremely important to raise the tactical level of units. However, owing to the fact that there exists among us, from top to bottom, the idea of attaching more importance to techniques than to tactics, there was little tactical content in examinations and

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the methods of this content were stereotyped, and the tactical training of units was done perfunctorily. In order to change this state of affairs, the army, the division, and the regiment need to organize their strength and carry out research to find out the content, standards, and ways to carrying out examinations on tactics, so that there will truly be good training in tactics and the training in this respect will be lively. To this end, we organized an enhanced examination for infantry company tactics based on the demands of actual combat, on unfamiliar terrain and under complex conditions, which tested combat operations arranged by higher levels and tested the organizational command and movement of detachments in carrying out a single combat mission, thereby comprehending tempering and improving the operational skills of the companies in marching, attacking, eating, bivouvacing, and concealing themselves and tentatively garnering for some experience in examining the unit's tactics.

Examine well the training in coordinating all service arms. Formerly this aspect was not examined, and there are still no clear-cut standards. This situation requires great efforts both at the top and the bottom to find out in practice methods of examining this aspect. Based on our preliminary practice, with regard to its content, there are three principal links in coordination training: the degree of mastery by the commanders of a combined arms force in applying the principles and the organizational procedural methods with regard to the service arms; the handling of all sorts of situations; and the coordination of infantry-artillery, infantry-tank movements as well as the coordination of the movements of specialized detachments. By centering on these three links we can fix standards and methods for the specific examination of commanders at all levels as well as the fighters. At a trail point in the examination this time, we attached technical arms under the regiment to infantry detachments. The seven infantry companies that took part in this examination were each augmented with a platoon which had a 82mm recoilless rifle, a 82mm mortar and a heavy machinegun and with a team that had three flamethrowers. For opposing airborne forces, the companies were also strengthened with two howitzer companies, one 85mm cannon company, and consistently put into effect in the training examination. The following points were examined according to the development of the battle: First, the preparatory fire by long-range artillery and the organizational command of each unit from the time of its advance to the time of its launching of an assault on the enemy. The coordinated operations of the directly aimed artillery's destruction of its target, the enemy armor, and the wiping out by all the infantry weapons firing at one time on the landed airborne enemy at a distance of 250 to 500 meters. Second, the coordinated operation of the tanks overtaking the infantry battle formation and leading the infantry assault, and also, when advancing, stopping for a short time and firing, violently breaking through and cutting the enemy line and then compressing the enemy into a narrow space. Third, the organizational command over the tanks in their original positions supporting the infantry assault, the short period of preparatory fire by mortars, and the simultaneous encircling and destruction of the enemy by 11 infantry, tank, and artillery detachments. Through this kind of live soldier and live ammunition training examination of the service arms, which tested the company-level commanders of the 11 companies that took part in the examination, an understanding was reached of their actual capacity to command combined arms operations. This preliminary test was a way for us to find out how to strengthen future training examinations with regard to coordinating the service arms.

With Regard to Examination Methods, We Must Be Adept at Creating Complex Conditions That Approximate the Battlefield, Designing Our Tests Based on War

In order to train military units, some countries in the West have set up special "training centers" and "testing grounds." Before the outbreak of the fourth Middle

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East war, the Egyptian army, in order to break through the Bar-Lev defense line, picked out a river that had the same velocity flow as The Suez Canal and conducted over 300 training tests on it. The creation by foreign armies of conditions that approximate actual combat is a very significant lesson for us. Based on the knowledge we gained from this training examination, of all the methods of reforming training, the most fundamental one is to provide testing conditions that approximate as closely as possible actual combat, designing our tests based on war.

1. Choose the site well so as to conduct the tests in an environment approximating actual combat. In military operations great attention must be paid to terrain, and in peacetime training terrain should also be given full attention. This time we chose a site that approximated the battlefield of a future war; it had the typical features of northern terrain. Based on different terrain features, a different content for the examination was arranged. With the units far from the barracks and drillground, they were tested in the field where the terrain and roads were unfamiliar and complex so that the environment approximated actual combat and they had to analyze and deal with problems. This was much different from past examinations, and with regard to where to move and position even the simplest piece of artillery or single horse, terrain had to be taken into account and given earnest thought.

2. The form of the situation must, as far as possible, embody the complexity of a future war. There are good terrain conditions and there are also good situations. There are situations on the battlefield in which the enemy collapses at our first assault and in which the enemy is routed at our first attack, but they have no actual value in peacetime training examinations. Therefore, the situation must be changed from that of the wishful thinking of the past so as to embody, as far as possible, actual combat situations. In the examination this time, in accordance with the enemy's tactical characteristics and the combat methods that could be adopted, as well as the missions that the various companies could shoulder in a future combat, we set up three training topics, viz, penetrating and cutting up the enemy, engaging the enemy, and attacking enemy airborne forces, with 19 training problems and 76 training contents. There were many complex changes in the situation: sometimes one kind of situation would appear suddenly, and at other times many kinds of situations from many directions would appear at one time. In a future war, all the possible situations we would encounter and all the possible methods and measures we could adopt with regard to the enemy were embodied in the training examination. This was beneficial for tempering and improving the unit's capabilities in actual combat.

3. Through strict examinations, set standards for actual combat. Practice proves that with the "nursemaid" method of training and examinations the genuine skills and knowledge required by actual combat cannot be learned. Formerly all types of firing were done on the shooting range and there were many conditions that assisted the firing. But when it comes to application, this type of training does not completely meet the demands of actual combat. This time for the live-ammunition firing examination, all sorts of targets continually appeared at the front or on the flanks, on the top of hills, at different heights, in big and small groups, and the targets were extremely irregular. Many targets were also concealed in thick growths of grass, making them hard to distinguish. The gunners had to make calcualtions for whatever terrain they occupied. The targets of fire were sometimes set at an angle of depression and sometimes at an angle of elevation, and for all of them the gunners had to estimate the distance themselves, set the rear sight themselves, and choose the point to aim at themselves. All of this greatly increased the difficulty

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in firing, and although the number of successful hits, as compared with those on the drillground, fell slightly, it was a useful firing exercise that approximated the conditions of actual combat and was by comparison solid and down-to-earth.

The Key to Reforming Examinations Is To Change the Leading Cadres' Ideas About Training

How a given unit's training is grasped and how the examination of its training is done always has a close connection with the ideas of the unit's leadership, especially the leading cadres in charge of training. Therefore, if we want to make the content and methods of examinations meet the demands of actual combat, the key is for the leading cadres' ideas about guiding training to be correct, and this requires that the following ideological barriers be done away with:

First is the idea of fearing a drop in examination scores. Some comrades worry that examining the units according to the standards of actual combat will lower scores. If we look at this question purely from the standpoint of examination marks, then the scores of examinations conducted in the field under conditions approximating actual combat will be somewhat lower than the scores of examinations conducted on the drillground. But the former scores actually reflect the unit's training level, and the unit learns true skills that it can use. If the unit were to only pursue so-called good scores on graphs, then when war breaks out it would suffer and even not be able to fulfill its mission.

Second is the negative idea of accident prevention. Some comrades fear that, by taking a unit in the field with all its vehicles, artillery pieces, supplies and gear, and engaging in exercises with live soldiers using live ammunition, if the exercise is not done well accidents will occur and there will be complaints from top to bottom. There should be a correct attitude toward this problem, and these comrades should recognize that in an examination conducted under conditions that approximate actual combat there is a greater possibility of accidents occuring than there is in a barracks, but one cannot, because of the fear of accidents occurring, bind one's own hands and feet. In the past, our army organized and carried out between 10 and 20 live-ammunition, night-and-day tactical exercises, from the company to divisional scale, without one accident that caused casualties. Practice proves that if the exercise is well organized and positive measures are taken, accidents can be avoided. We also see that only a unit that dares to temper itself in peacetime can reduce its casualties in wartime, paying a small price for a big victory.

Third is the idea of seeking an easy life and fearing trouble. To organize a training examination based on the standards of actual combat, one must beforehand go into the field and survey the terrain, choose a site, scale mountains and ford streams, formulate a plan and concretely carry out a program, and judge standards. The work is complex, the organization of the examination is difficult, and it requires arduous labor. It will not do to seek an easy life and fear trouble. We only need to know that whether a unit's training can be carried out in peacetime has a direct bearing on whether it can be led to victory in wartime, on whether it can complete the combat mission given to it by the party and the people. By keeping the overall situation in mind, hardship and fatigue will not be things to fuss about.

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PARTY AND STATE

EDITORIAL CALLS ON PLA TO OBEY PARTY ORDERS

Beijing JIEFANGJUN BAO in Chinese 2 Feb 81 pp 1-2

[Editorial: "Unify the Thinking and Actions of Army Units with the Party's Line, Principles and Policies"]

[Text] The PLA General Political Department is holding an all-army political work conference with the study and implementation of the guidelines of the central work conference as its central theme, calling for a thorough study of how to greatly strengthen army political work under the new situation, how to uphold the four basic principles and how to urge the army units to think and act in a way consistent with the party's line, principles and policies. This is a very significant guarantee for cadres and fighters to take a step forward in the achievement of political unity with the party Central Committee, to fulfill successfully all missions assigned to our army by the party Central Committee and its Military Commission and to accelerate the building of a modern revolutionary army.

Our army is a revolutionary armed group devoted to implementing the party's political task under the absolute leadership of the party. How to make our army units think and act in a way consistent with the party's line, principles and policies is the basic objective of our army's political work and a reflection of our army's excellent tradition. Since the day our army founded and developed this political work for the revolution, it has consistently emphasized the need to educate our army units in the party's program, principles and policies so that they will pledge their loyalty to the absolute leadership of the party. This point has been profoundly emphasized and set forth unequivocally in works by Comrade Mao Zedong and other revolutionaries of the older generation and in the regulations governing the political work of our army. During the long period of struggle waged by our army, which spans over a half century, it has always thought and acted in a way pointed out by the party Central Committee and has never failed to obey its correct orders in action. For this reason, it has become a powerful revolutionary army of total devotion to the people's cause such as has never before appeared in Chinese history.

Today when we reach a new turning point in history, it is particularly significant to emphasize the necessity of making all our army units think and act in a way consistent with the party's line, principles and policies and to take a step forward in achieving political unity with the party Central Committee. Since the 30 Plenary Session of the 11th party Central Committee, the party Central

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Committee has reaffirmed and set forth its ideological, political and organizational line, and promulgated a series of new policies in the political, economic and cultural fields. Through practice, this line and principles and policies have been proven to be effective and completely correct, and therefore, have won the broadest support of our people and our army commanders and fighters. The major policy adopted by the central work conference last December with the aim of further readjusting the economy and bringing about greater political stability has also proved to be the only correct political and economical policy for our country at present. In order to meet the new challenges, to keep ourselves abreast of the constant development of the new situation, to strengthen effectively political work, to use the line, principles and policies adopted since the Third Plenum to arm the minds of cadres and fighters, and to help our army units raise their consciousness to the need to implement the guidelines of the central work conference, we must consider it absolutely necessary and urgent to improve our army work. We must consider organizing the study of the line, principles and policies adopted since the Third Plenum and their implementation, as well as the study and implementation of the guidelines of the central work conference to be the primary duty of party committees at all levels and leading cadres, and the central theme of our current political work and political education.

While studying the central documents and trying to grasp their spirit and essence, we must concentrate special attention on grasping the general guiding thought of the Third Plenum, and deepen our understanding of the guidelines of the central work conference in light of the developing and changing situation. The guiding thought of the Third Plenum embodies the principles of "emancipating the mind, starting up the machinery, seeking truth from facts, uniting and looking forward, studying the new situation and seeking solutions for new problems." The guiding principle of economic construction set forth by the Third Plenum actually resulted from an accurate review of experiences and lessons our country has accumulated in economic work during the past 31 years, and a full-scale assessment of the current situation of our country which takes into account such essential conditions as large population, a backward economy, and low-level science, technology, education and culture. This guiding principle represents a step forward in implementing the guiding thought of the Third Plenum which calls for seeking truth from facts and correcting leftist errors, and is therefore entirely consistent with the series of policies adopted since the Third Plenum. Practice shows that as long as we grasp the guiding thought of the Third Plenum, we will be able to correctly assess the domestic economic and political situation, and accurately comprehend the policies adopted by the party Central Committee. Only thus can we truly think in a way consistent with the party's line, principles and policies.

It must be emphasized that the four basic principles--the socialist road, the people's democratic dictatorship or the dictatorship of the proletariat, party leadership and Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought--are principles that have long been consistently upheld by our party. Whether the four basic principles can be upheld will have a bearing on the future and destiny of our party and state. Since the Third Plenum, our party has put into effect an ideological line, a political line and an organizational line and a series of principles and policies, all of which have been formulated in coordination with the new situation and under

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the guidance of the four basic principles and all of which are designed to better implement the four basic principles under the new situation. Only by correctly assessing and firmly grasping the four basic principles and acknowledging consistency between the four basic principles on the one hand and the line, principles and policies adopted since the Third Plenum on the other can we thoroughly understand and better implement the party's line, principles and policies and convert them into a weapon to recognize, criticize and overcome all forms of erroneous ideology. In this connection, our assertion that we must maintain political unity with the party Central Committee means firmly upholding the four basic principles, and acting in a way consistent with the line, principles and policies adopted since the Third Plenum. For the time being, it means resolutely implementing policies approved by the central work conference. This is the aim and objective of our political work. The current all-army political work conference has listed the study of how to publicize and implement the four basic principles as its basic guiding thought and main content of discussion. This is indeed a very timely and necessary action.

The key to success in making our army units think and act in a way consistent with the party's line, principles and policies rests with a conscientious effort to study and profoundly understand the spirit and essence of the party Central Committee documents, to wield these ideological weapons well, and to use them as a basis for maintaining rapport with reality, for carrying out work with a well-defined objective in mind, for solving problems effectively, and for strengthening the militant character of our ideological and political work. The objective of thinking and acting in a united way cannot be achieved if we just echo what the books say, if we discuss matters of common interest in general terms, if we present our views in a purely philosophical way, if we do everything as a matter of formality, and if we fail to keep in touch with reality. Our discussion on maintaining contact with reality means maintaining contact with specific units and departments, and especially with what one really has in mind with regard to work. How far we have gone in understanding the line, principles and policies adopted since the Third Plenum, what results we have produced from their implementation, what experiences and lessons we have drawn from this endeavor, and what shortcomings, misunderstandings and miscomprehensions, misgivings or even conflicts of interest we still have--all these must be reviewed and examined. We must focus attention on eliminating the "leftist" influence, and overcoming other erroneous tendencies. We must consider it necessry to launch criticism and self-criticism, so that we can think everything over clearly, and get everything done spontaneously. We must give those comrades who do not understand well the party's principles and policies an opportunity to raise their political consciousness and permit them to reflect some of their opinions and suggestions to higher authorities. In the course of study, we must keep our minds open, and improve our ways of thinking in a united way through the discussion and study of different opinions. The principle that "the individual is subordinate to the organization, the minority is subordinate to the majority, the lower level is subordinate to the higher level, and the entire membership is subordinate to the Central Committee" should be strictly observed at all times. No one should be permitted to criticize any decisions once they are made by the party Central Committee; nor should anyone be allowed to make critical speeches and spread antagonistic statements inside and outside the party. We must clearly understand the effect that various social trends of thought may have on our army units. We must actively take action to educate, criticize and wage the necessary ideological

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struggle against those who speak and act in violation of the party's line, principles and policies and the four basic principles. These are violations that cannot be tolerated.

In studying the central documents and in conducting education in the party's line, principles and policies, it is extremely important to educate cadres, especially leading cadres at the regiment and higher levels in this field. Leading cadres are urged to study well and clarify their thinking. Only in this way can they lead army units to study well, help them solve problems in connection with reality, and act as models in guiding them to firmly implement the party's line, principles and policies. Education must be conducted on a level-by-level basis until cadres at all levels can take turns in receiving training. Leading cadres must first study well before beginning a lecture tour of the army units explaining to them the party's principles and policies and answering questions raised by them. We must teach cadres to firmly believe that the leadership provided by the party Central Committee and the party's line, principles and policies adopted since the Third Plenum are corrected. It is necessary to resolutely implement the major policies approved by the central work conference to do everything, consider problems and carry out work from the standpoint of the overall interest of further readjusting the economy and bringing about greater political stability. It is necessary to take into account this overall interest, subordinate local interests to it, and strive to meet and benefit this overall interest rather than impair it in the slightest way, no matter what we do. Yielding local interests to revolutionary interests, putting the overall interest of the revolution above all else, and consciously implementing the party's line, principles and policies have become an excellent tradition of our party. But following the 10 years of catastrophe, this tradition has been trampled underfoot. Today, the moment has come for us to reeducate our army units, especially cadres, in this excellent tradition in conjunction with the new situation.

To make the party's line, principles and policies truly take root in the army, party committees at all levels must persist in seeking truth from facts, and in upholding the mass line, and must abandon the general method of work. Isn't it true that since the 30 Plenary Session of the 11th party Central Committee, repeated efforts have been made to promote the study of the new situation and seek solutions for new problems? How much has been actually done by party committees at all levels should be conscientiously examined through the study of the documents on the central work conference. Further efforts must also be made to study ways to thoroughly implement such documents. The series of new policies adopted by the party Central Committee reflect a law and a remarkable spirit in this new period of history. If we still think and act in the same old way, we will be unable to keep abreast of the developing new situation, nor will we be able to meet the needs of the party Central Committee's policy decisions. Party committees and leading cadres at all levels must continue to emancipate their minds, stimulate their revolutionary spirit, carry forward the work style of hard struggle, maintain rapport with reality, keep in close touch with the masses, conduct investigations and study, understand and control the trends of thought among the army units, size up the new situation, seek solutions for new problems, and suggest effective measures for examination and implementation by army units. Only in this way can we implement the guidelines of the central work conference in coordination with the actual needs of our army units, and help them greatly improve their ways of thinking and rectify their work style. Since the third

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Plenum, great changes have taken place and great progress has been made on the political and economic fronts throughout the country. Both the economic situation and the situation of political stability have been faring better and better year after year. To us, an overall and correct understanding of this situation seems necessary. Only by assessing it in the same way as the party Central Committee does, can we think and act in a way consistent with the party's line, principles and policies. The PLA is a revolutionary army led by the CCP, a strong pillar of the people's democratic dictatorship or the dictatorship of the proletariat, which must assume the historical mission to defend the motherland and protect the four modernizations programs. We must think and act in a way consistent with the party's line, principles and policies, obey orders of the party Central Committee in all our actions, and act as models in implementing the party's line, principles and policies, and in enhancing stability and unity. Only in this way can we make a greater contribution to the party and people.

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PARTY AND STATE

CHINA PUBLISHES ENGLISH LANGUAGE DAILY

Hong Kong ASIAWEEK in English 12 Jun 81 p 35

[Text]

Last week, China marked a milestone in its press history: the first English-language daily newspaper since the founding of the People's Republic in 1949 was launched on June 1. The *China Daily*, an eight-page broadsheet, is being distributed outside as well as in China; it will serve as the Peking government's official organ in communications with the rest of the world. Primarily aimed at foreign residents and tourists in China, the paper will strive to avoid the heavy-handed ideological writing that dominates its sister publication, the *People's Daily*.

The editors are determined to produce a first-rate, readable journal. Published five times a week, from Tuesday to Saturday, the *China Daily* gives prominence to international news, devoting the front and back pages to coverage of major domestic and foreign events. The second page is given to finance and economics, with special columns on such capitalist phenomena as stock and commodities markets. Opposite that is a page of domestic news, with a focus on Peking, while the fourth page is reserved for editorial commentary and readers' correspondence. "The Arts," reads the banner across page five, and the last few pages are filled with features, entertainment listings and sports news from China and abroad.

Overseeing the entire endeavour is Feng Xiliang, a former editor of the English-language *Peking Review*. Feng's staff is large by non-Chinese standards: more than 120 people, of whom 50 are journalists, and 22 correspondents distributed around the globe. (The *People's Daily*, by comparison, has some 1,800 staffers, 600 of whom are involved in editorial work.)

The *China Daily* had been on the drawing board for years. Last year, the *People's Daily*'s managing director, Jiang Muyue, and general manager, An Wenyi, headed an executive team which visited the headquarters of Australian publishers David Syme & Company, owners of the influential Melbourne *Age* newspaper, where they prepared and printed a pilot "dummy" of the *China Daily*. In May, trial copies based on that original dummy were distributed in major Chinese cities.

While in Melbourne, the Chinese also worked out a deal with Syme to "borrow" John Lawrence of the *Age* as the Chinese paper's editorial adviser. Lawrence, a former director of the Nigerian Institute of Journalism, explained that initially, the Chinese would be relying on foreign expertise in layout and production matters: "Obviously, the Chinese lean on us. No one on the staff has experience of Western newspaper practice or methods." Syme representatives have stressed, however, that the editorial decision-making is entirely in Chinese hands. Syme's top man, Ranald Macdonald, emphasised: "We will have no say — and would not want any — in the editorial policy of the paper."

Until editor Feng has built up the paper's reporting strength, he will be relying mostly on dispatches from China's official Xinhua News Agency. Chen Long, Xinhua's director in charge of external news services, told *Asiaweek*: "We're doing as much as we can, but of course, we are short of hands, and our emphasis on brief domestic stories for an international service isn't entirely suitable for the new daily." Admits Chen: "For many years during that long catastrophe

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[the Cultural Revolution], we fed untruths to the masses at home and abroad." But since the fall of the Gang of Four in 1976, claims Chen, Xinhua has "stopped feeding lies. We recognise it is important for our credibility that we uphold the truth."

A glance through the *China Daily*'s trial issues reveals that the editors are clearly striving to keep the paper from becoming a propaganda sheet. Yet they will encounter some problems. For example, a front-page article from the Apr. 10 issue, "Lashing Out at Kuomintang," says: "It is sheer day-dreaming for the Taiwan authorities to try to impose their reactionary rule upon the people on the mainland, local observers said."

Despite these perhaps inevitable difficulties, the *China Daily* is expected to attain a circulation of 50,000 by year's end from an initial run of 20,000. As Syme Media Enterprises (HK) Ltd. has concluded, it may prove a significant products forum; the subsidiary of Australia's *Age* group has secured rights to market up to 85% of the total advertising space available. (The rest will go to domestic producers.) The advertisements, selling for US$6.50 per column centimetre, will appear in fixed spaces over six pages of the newspaper; neither the front nor opinion pages will carry ads. Syme already distributes in China a magazine on technology. One executive boasted that the "biggest problem" for advertisers in that publication is "coping with the flood of replies generated by every issue. The Chinese have a tremendous thirst for knowledge, especially about technical matters."

Itself not a step behind the times in things technical, the *China Daily* has a production system that utilises some of the most up-to-date equipment, such as U.S.-made Compugraphic photo typesetting machines. It is printed on the *People's Daily*'s four double-width Metroliner web-offset presses, which are reputedly capable of rolling off 400,000 copies an hour. As its circulation increases, the English daily may also make use of its sister outfit's impressive distribution network, which has 6-7m. copies of the *People's Daily* delivered each day to cadres and commoners from Shanghai to Xinjiang.

The *China Daily* is an ambitious project, but one unlikely to fail. For the estimated 40,000 foreigners living in China and the 200,000 tourists who visit it annually, it is a welcome — and unique — opportunity to catch up with the outside world. And for the 25 million Chinese who are studying English, it not only offers a good chance to practise reading skills, but is an exciting symbol of their nation's new outward-looking approach to the world. □

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